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LETTER DATED 25 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ANGOLA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit the text of the message dated 18 October 1999 from João Bernardo de Miranda, Minister of External Relations, to the Secretary-General, and request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Afonso VAN DUNEM "MBINDA"
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

99-32184 (E) 291099

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Annex

Letter dated 18 October 1999 from the Minister of External Relations of Angola addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you that my Government has given its consent to the installation of a United Nations office in Angola. Its composition should be of up to 30 elements.

As you may recall, in my letter dated 29 June 1999, I stressed that, under the present circumstances, a United Nations presence in Angola can only be of great utility and effectiveness if its activity is restricted to the area of humanitarian assistance and the capacity-building and strengthening of Angolan Government institutions in the field of human rights.

In this context, my Government reaffirms its position to the effect that the mandate of the United Nations office in Angola should be to serve as a liaison between the Government of Angola and the Secretary-General, with a view to ensuring a close follow-up to the situation in Angola by the Security Council in matters related to humanitarian assistance and the capacity-building and strengthening of Angolan Government institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.

In this way, we will be confining ourselves to the spirit of Security Council resolution 1229 (1999) of 26 February 1999, as well as the statement dated 21 January 1999 by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/1999/3). I seize the opportunity of this exchange of letters to try to spell out the definition of its mandate and the scope of the activity.

With a view to facilitating the communication and coordination between the Government of Angola and you, it would be advisable that one head officer is appointed. Any other member of the office, regardless of his or her specific area of activity, should be subordinated to the head officer.

As to the Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, we support its role. My Government has no objection as to its current configuration, that is, independent from the United Nations office in Angola.

With regard to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations office in Angola and its members, they will continue to be granted in accordance with the relevant international conventions to which my Government is a signatory, namely, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

Concerning the questions related to public information, the Government of Angola is of the opinion that, given the nature and the scope of the mission, the installation of a broadcasting station and the allocation of a special space in the media will not be required. This, however, should not preclude the right to accede to national television and broadcasting in order to report information about its activity.

Concerning the denomination of the future United Nations mission to Angola, we have nothing to oppose. The acronym UNOA for the United Nations Office in Angola is acceptable to us.

At this point in time, it is our belief that the necessary conditions for the conclusion and signing of the headquarters agreement are already in place.

Meanwhile, it is our sincere hope that the observations I have made will be taken into account so that the United Nations Office in Angola can begin its operation as quickly as possible.

(Signed) João Bernardo de MIRANDA
Minister of External Relations